

Amendment and Response Under 37 C.F.R. 1.116

Applicant: Werner Ertle et al.

Serial No.: 10/522,502

Filed: November 11, 2005

Docket No.: I431.124.101/FIN404PCT/US

Title: SEMICONDUCTOR WAFER WITH ELECTRICALLY CONNECTED CONTACT AND TEST AREAS

REMARKS

The following remarks are made in response to the Final Office Action mailed October 30, 2008. Claims 34-37 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1-17, 20, 21 and 40 have been cancelled. With this Response, claims 18, 19, 22, 23, 26, 28, 29, 38, 39 and 41 have been amended. Claims 18, 19, 22-39 and 41 remain pending in the application and are presented for reconsideration and allowance.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 18-21, 23, 24, 26, 27, and 38-41 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by the Yoshida U.S. Patent No. 6,445,001 (Yoshida). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Independent claims 18, 38 and 39 have been amended to more clearly recite the claimed device. As amended, these claims each recite

contact areas and test areas having respective top surfaces which are arranged in a common plane and exposed to the top side of the semiconductor chip through contact windows and test windows, respectively the contact areas and test areas are in each case electrically conductively connected to one another via a conduction web that has a top surface that lies in the common plane ... and

an insulating layer having through contacts arranged in the region of the conduction web and extending from the conduction web to a lower plane, the through contacts being connected to interconnects that are connected to electrodes of the components of the integrated circuit;

wherein the contact areas and the test areas are free from the through contacts.

It is well accepted that, to anticipate a claim, the cited reference must disclose each claim element. MPEP 2131. Since Yoshida fails to disclose each of the recited elements, it cannot anticipate claims 18-21, 23, 24, 26, 27, and 38-41.

For example, Yoshida clearly fails to disclose contact areas and test areas that have top surfaces arranged in a common plane and exposed to the top side, with a conduction web that also has a top surface in the plane of the contact areas and test areas. Regarding the conduction

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web, the Office Action refers to item 15 in Figure 7 of Yoshida, which clearly is not coplanar with the contact areas and test areas.

Further, Yoshida fails to disclose contact areas and test areas that are free of through contacts. With the arrangement of the through contacts only in the conduction web recited in the claims, the upper surface of the contact area is not disturbed by the through contact.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 102 rejection to the claims, and request allowance of these claims.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 22, 25 and 28-33 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 for being unpatentable over Yoshida in view of other references. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

Claims 22 and 25 ultimately depend from claim 18, which is allowable as set forth above. Claims 22 and 25 are thus allowable for at least the same reasons.

Claim 28 has been amended to include limitations similar to those discussed above in conjunction with the rejections under section 102. Claim 28, and claims 29-33 dependent thereon, thus include limitations not disclosed or suggested in the Yoshida reference. As such, these claims are also in condition for allowance.

Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the 35 U.S.C. § 103 rejection to the claims, and request allowance of these claims.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the above, Applicant respectfully submits that all of the pending claims are in form for allowance and are not taught or suggested by the cited references. As such, entry and consideration of this paper is believed proper in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.116. Therefore, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections and allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

No fees are required under 37 C.F.R. 1.16(h)(i). However, if such fees are required, the Patent Office is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-0471.

The Examiner is invited to contact the Applicant's representative at the below-listed telephone numbers to facilitate prosecution of this application.

Any inquiry regarding this Amendment and Response should be directed to Mark L. Gleason at Telephone No. (612) 767-2503, Facsimile No. (612) 573-2005. In addition, all correspondence should continue to be directed to the following address:

Dicke, Billig & Czaja
Fifth Street Towers, Suite 2250
100 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402

Respectfully submitted,

Werner Ertle et al.,

By their attorneys,

DICKE, BILLIG & CZAJA, PLLC
Fifth Street Towers, Suite 2250
100 South Fifth Street
Minneapolis, MN 55402
Telephone: (612) 767-2503
Facsimile: (612) 573-2005

Date: 12/16/2008

MLG:mlm:cjs

/Mark L. Gleason/

Mark L. Gleason

Reg. No. 39,998